



Sheila Dixon

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 23, 2007

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Mayor Dixon Announces Historic Agreement with City Hospitals

Pledge cooperation with mobilization of emergency services; plan coordination through City operations center

Baltimore, MD (January 23, 2007) – Mayor Sheila Dixon and the leaders of Baltimore City hospitals announced a historic agreement for cooperation in the event of a bioterrorist attack or other public health catastrophe.

The agreement includes a Memorandum of Understanding, signed in April 2006, that permits the sharing of staff and supplies among city hospitals. It also includes a new plan for coordination of mutual aid through the city's emergency operations center.

“Just as our first responders talk to each other through interoperable communications equipment, this step means that our hospitals can collaborate efficiently in the midst of a serious event,” said Mayor Dixon.

Hospitals covered by the Memorandum of Understanding include:

- Bon Secours Hospital;
- Good Samaritan Hospital;
- Harbor Hospital;
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center;
- The Johns Hopkins Hospital;
- Maryland General Hospital;
- Mercy Medical Center;
- Sinai Hospital;
- St. Agnes Hospital;
- Union Memorial Hospital; and
- University of Maryland Medical Center

The Memorandum of Understanding establishes a mechanism for hospitals to share supplies, equipment, and personnel and transfer patients in the event of a disaster. It addresses expenses, credentialing, and supervision of physicians. The agreement also spells out liability, insurance, and confidentiality issues. By specifying the roles and responsibilities of the impacted facility

and the donor facility prior to a disaster, the agreement allows for assistance to be provided rapidly.

Experts in emergency preparedness and hospital leaders praised the announcement.

“In a catastrophic public health crisis, it is critical that a big city has a plan to coordinate its otherwise diverse acute care facilities. Baltimore has taken a leading role to get this done and it has established a model for others to follow,” said Michael Greenberger, Director of the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security.

Ronald Peterson, President of Johns Hopkins Health System, said, “This is an important step forward for cooperation among our city’s hospitals and between the hospital system and the city in responding to major emergencies.”

“Cooperation and coordination among all of the city hospitals are essential to a rapid and effective response to a citywide disaster,” said Dr. Timothy Babineau, Chief Medical Officer of the University of Maryland Medical Center. “The signing and implementation of this agreement will advance emergency preparedness efforts in Baltimore City.”

“This agreement shows that our hospitals and academic medical centers are placing a high priority on preparing for a natural disaster or bioterrorist event,” said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. “It also establishes a platform for further progress.”

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